



STATE SENATOR JOSEPH HARRISON

Indiana State Senate
200 West Washington Street
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204



2004 Post-Session Newsletter

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Fairness in Funding:

Full-day kindergarten should be implemented the right way.

During last year's budget session of the General Assembly, education was our number one priority. It was the only area in government that was given an increase during these difficult fiscal times.

While surrounding states have cut education, we worked hard to provide our schools with a 3.3 percent increase in funding for Fiscal Year 2004 and a 2.9 percent increase in 2005. This additional funding has placed Indiana 10th in the country in per pupil spending, which is a commitment that senators want to be able to keep.

The state has drained every reserve account to make ends meet and provide schools with the money needed to continue essential programs for this budget cycle. The numbers from the most recent revenue forecast show that the state is not recovering as quickly as hoped and that the state needs to be cautious about what

we are spending so we can keep the promise we made to our schools.

After an early start to our 2004 session, which officially began in mid-November, the governor suddenly decided that full-day kindergarten would be his top priority when he gave his State of the State address in January.

His first proposal was to fund the partial tuition of 20,000 full-day kindergarten pupils this fall. Parents were expected to pay for a portion of their child's extra hours at school. The governor proposed several shaky funding mechanisms to cover the remainder, including changing the state constitution to tap into an account reserved for schools' construction and renovation projects.

When the bill reached the Senate, the majority agreed that the state simply does not have enough money right now to pay for a statewide full-day kindergarten program.

We all agree that early learning is important, which is why we wanted to form a committee to work this summer to find sustainable funding for the initiative. Unfortunately, Democrats decided that if they couldn't get funding this year, they were not interested in studying the issue this summer. The bill died in conference committee on the last night of the session.

I believe in Indiana's children, and I want them to have every opportunity to be successful. That is why it is so important to approach new government programs and spending with a critical eye.

We must first fund our current obligations to public education before committing ourselves to even more taxpayer dollars.

Indiana is 10th in the nation for per-pupil education spending.

Education is the only area of government that received an increase in funding during difficult economic times.



State Senator Joseph Harrison

Serving District 23 — Boone, Clinton, Fountain, Hendricks, Montgomery & Warren Counties



2004 Facts & Figures

The Second Regular Session of the 113th General Assembly began on Organization Day, November 18, 2003, and adjourned March 4, 2004.

This non-budget year is known as the "short" session.

Senate bills introduced: 503
Senate joint resolutions introduced: 10

Senate bills passed: 18
Senate joint resolutions passed: 0

House bills introduced: 459
House joint resolutions introduced: 7

House bills passed: 80
House joint resolutions passed: 0

Percent of introduced bills that were sent to the governor: 10%

For more information about the General Assembly's 2004 session, visit us online at: www.in.gov/legislative

Visit my web site at: www.in.gov/S23

Defining ♂♀ Marriage

The traditional definition of marriage has been under attack in courts across America by special interest groups representing the same-sex rights lobby. Recently, the Massachusetts Supreme Court ruled that same-sex marriages must be recognized under state law. A similar effort is underway in Indiana, as the Indiana Civil Liberties Union has sued on behalf of three same-sex couples to have their relationships recognized as marriages in the Hoosier state.

The concept of one man, one woman marriage has been enshrined in our history, our laws, and our religious traditions for thousands of years and I believe it should be protected and promoted. Efforts to legitimize same-sex marriage hurt the traditional institution of marriage and open the door to legal challenges in favor of polygamy and other outlandish behaviors.

Indiana law, as well as the law in 37 other states and federal law, currently defines marriage as the union of one man and one woman. However, if these interest groups

are successful in their court challenge, an amendment to the Indiana Constitution is the only means available to protect our law and our traditions. Four states currently have such an amendment, and President Bush called for an amendment to the U.S. Constitution in his State of the Union speech, and again recently.

Marriage should be constitutionally defined as the union of one man and one woman.

To address this attack on traditional marriage, Senate Joint Resolution 7 was introduced by Senator Brandt Hershman to amend the Indiana Constitution to define marriage and prevent recognition of same-sex couples. SJR 7 would have to be approved by two separately elected general assemblies and put on a statewide ballot for voter approval before it could become law.

The measure passed the full Senate by a vote of 42 to 7 after several hours of cordial debate and discussion. Unfortunately, when the resolution passed to the House of Representatives for consideration, the

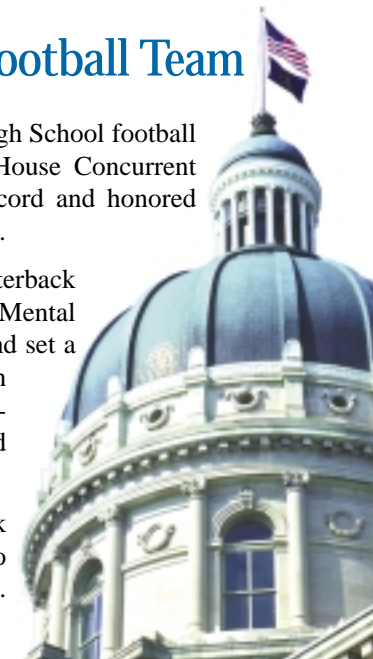
see MARRIAGE, page 3

Harrison Congratulates Tri-West Football Team

I sponsored a House resolution recognizing the Tri-West High School football team upon its Class 2-A State Championship victory. House Concurrent Resolution 11 congratulated the team on its 15 to 1 record and honored Coach Mark Haste for his second state football championship.

I also sponsored HCR 12 to honor Tri-West School quarterback T.J. Siple for being named the Class 2A Phil N. Eskew Mental Attitude Award winner. Siple led the state in passing yards and set a new school records for career passing yards and touchdown passes. The prestigious award is presented each year to a football state finalist who excels in mental attitude, scholarship and athletic ability.

These players are a testament to the importance of hard work and dedication to their sport and their education. I am proud to have them as representatives of the people of Senate District 23.



Medicare Fraud Schemes Target Senior Citizens

Senior citizens should be alert and aware of identity theft schemes that are intended to defraud the Medicare program. Although this program is run by the federal government, state legislators have been alerted to a scam that could carry a devastating cost.

There have been reports in Indiana, Nebraska, Oklahoma and Georgia of individuals going door-to-door to sign up senior citizens for the Medicare Prescription Drug Cards or to sell them Medigap insurance. Seniors are offered an opportunity to sign up in exchange for their Medicare numbers. **MEDICARE DOES NOT GO DOOR-TO-DOOR.**

Seniors can protect themselves:

- Never give your Medicare, Medicaid, or Social Security number to anyone who comes to your door.
- Never give these numbers to anyone who promises "free services."
- Hang up on telemarketers who ask for any of these numbers or for your bank account number.

Call, toll-free, **1-800-986-3505** to report suspected Medicare fraud and abuse. It will ring into your local Area Agency on Aging. Area Agencies are part of the Medicare fraud prevention project called Senior ESP. All suspected fraud and abuse case information is confidential.

Guarding Liberty: Legislature Defends Gun Owners' Rights

**"The people shall have a right to bear arms,
for the defense of themselves and the State."**

*Article 1, Section 32
Indiana Constitution*

The Indiana Constitution grants us the freedom to own firearms and store them in our homes. In Indiana, however, if someone is in your home, steals your gun, and injures or kills someone, you can be held liable.

Last April, the Indiana Supreme Court ordered gun owners to store their guns properly in their own homes or face possible lawsuits. We in the Senate want to protect gun owners in Indiana who are law-abiding citizens. House Enrolled Act 1349 prevents gun owners from being sued if their guns were stolen and used to commit a crime.

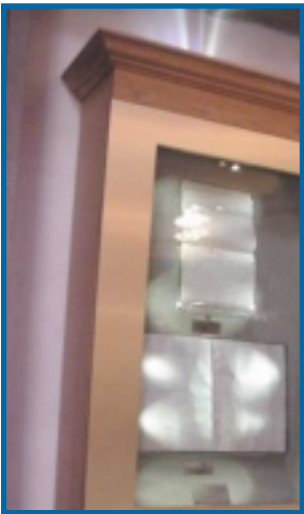
Many opponents of this legislation argue that the bill grants too much protection to gun owners, especially those who are reckless in storing their guns. On one hand, gun owners should be responsible for their guns and keep them in safe places away from strangers and known criminals. However, this bill does not protect

those who are reckless.

Should you be held liable for the unconscionable acts committed by a criminal simply because your property assisted in that act? Clearly, the legislature believes the answer should be no. The protection afforded in the legislation is no different than if someone were to steal your car, which you legally own, and injure someone with it. The driver, not the owner, maintains liability.

HEA 1349 also limits the ability of Indiana's prison inmates to file frivolous lawsuits. Some offenders file lawsuits repeatedly, and this bill allows a judge to dismiss them if they have no merit. These suits tie up the local courts and make it difficult to conduct legitimate business.

This provision attempts to restore social responsibility and place blame where it belongs — on the offender, not the law-abiding citizen.



WORKING - for - JOBS

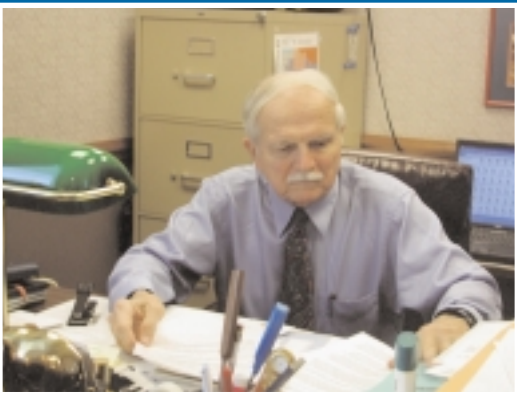
In 2003, the Senate passed legislation with significant economic development measures, dubbed the JOBS plan. Economic development is full time work, and we are constantly trying to improve our business climate here in Indiana to help more Hoosiers find jobs.

Despite a \$1 billion state budget deficit, the Senate has continued to seek new ways to foster a more competitive atmosphere for businesses in Indiana.

One critical bill, House Enrolled Act 1365, passed the Senate this session and should provide some new momentum for our economic development efforts. It is a combination of several bills that focus on expanding small business investment, improving research and development and encouraging growth around the state.

Economic Development Provisions in HEA 1365

- Makes several research and investment tax credits permanent.
Economic Importance: Businesses will have confidence to invest in creating innovative new products knowing the credits are stable.
- Adds the Emerging Technology Grant Fund to the 21st Century Research and Technology Fund.
Economic Importance: The Fund will match federal grants for small-sized technology-based businesses to accelerate the commercialization of new discoveries in the life sciences, information technology, advanced manufacturing, or logistics industries.
- Gives tax incentives to businesses who locate new or expanded operations on closed military bases.
Economic Importance: Incentives given to businesses on Grissom Air Force Base, Fort Benjamin Harrison and Crane Naval



ALL IN A DAY'S WORK: Senator Harrison reviews bills that were heard in the Senate Committee on Pensions and Labor. Senator Harrison has served as chairman of this committee since 1981.

Surface Warfare Center will spark the local economy. New tax incentives are vital due to the elimination of the inventory tax by 2007.

- Improves rules regarding Community Revitalization Enhancement Districts (CREDs).
Economic Importance: CREDs are important economic development tools for the downtown areas of our cities. Expanding and improving CREDs will further these efforts.
- Allows local governments to assess an annual fee to recipients of tax abatements.
Economic Importance: The fee would be used by local economic development boards to help provide more jobs within the area. It would help small rural communities that do not have big budgets for economic development.
- Repeals the sales tax on complimentary hotel rooms.
Economic Importance: Indiana will be more competitive with other states in attracting tourism and convention business.

The provisions mentioned are only several of many economic development bills filed this session. We will continue our effort to provide Indiana with the tools needed to improve our economic climate.

MARRIAGE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Speaker of the House declared that he would allow no public hearing on the matter. In response, House Republicans lobbied for several weeks and attempted a variety of legislative maneuvers to convince the Speaker to reconsider. Unfortunately, the Speaker would not

relent, so there will be no opportunity for citizens to vote on the issue until late 2008.

I believe this is a matter which should be addressed by the entire legislature and the citizens of Indiana through a statewide voting referendum, rather than through the actions of an activist judiciary.

HOUSE ENROLLED ACT 1265 — Establishes a program pooling state employees to negotiate lower prices for bulk purchases of prescription drugs. Applies to schools, state colleges and universities, and cities and towns. **PASSED.** My vote: YES

SENATE BILL 85 — Makes it illegal to have open alcoholic beverage containers in a motor vehicle, regardless of whether or not the driver has been drinking. This law could have brought Indiana \$13.5 million in federal funds. **FAILED.** My vote: YES

HOUSE ENROLLED ACT 1082 — Requires a review of entries in the Missing Children Clearinghouse within 60 days after the review required by laws governing reports made to the National Crime Information Center (NCIC). **PASSED.** My vote: YES

HOUSE ENROLLED ACT 1194 — Opens state records regarding a child who died as a result of abuse, abandonment, or neglect. Requires extensive background checks on all members of a household for temporary and permanent placements. **PASSED.** My vote: YES

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 7 — Would have begun the process of amending the state constitution to define marriage as the union of one man and one woman. Because it failed in the House, the earliest the provision could appear on the ballot is 2008. **FAILED.** My vote: YES

SENATE ENROLLED ACT 86 — Allows a voter to check "address unchanged" box on poll list instead of writing entire address when signing in to vote. Would save voters time when polls are crowded. **PASSED.** My vote: YES